

EDINA PARK BOARD
7:30 P.M.
MANAGER'S CONFERENCE ROOM
OCTOBER 13, 1998

MEMBERS PRESENT: Bill Jenkins, Beth Hall, Andrew Montgomery, Andy Herring,
Becky Bennett, Tom White, Jean Rydell

MEMBERS ABSENT: Dave Crowther, John Dovolis, Dave Fredlund, Phyllis Kohler

STAFF PRESENT: Ed MacHolda, Janet Canton

OTHERS PRESENT: Marjorie Ruedy

I. APPROVAL OF THE SEPTEMBER 8, 1998 PARK BOARD MINUTES

Bill Jenkins MOVED TO APPROVE THE SEPTEMBER 8, 1998 PARK BOARD MINUTES. Jean Rydell SECONDED THE MOTION. MINUTES APPROVED.

II. 1999 FEES AND CHARGES

Mr. MacHolda noted that at the last Park Board meeting the 1999 Fees and Charges were discussed and it was asked that two items be brought back for discussion. Those two items being the playground program fee and the facility use fee.

Mr. Herring indicated that he felt Mr. Keprios' explanation in his staff report was very good and asked the Park Board members if they had any further questions.

It was noted that surrounding communities charge anywhere from \$12.00 to \$50.00 for their playground programs. Mr. Herring pointed out that the current level of subsidy per child is approximately \$70.00, which is after the \$12.00 fee is taken into consideration. Mr. MacHolda commented that he reviewed the expense sheet for 1998 and actually the subsidy per child was \$46.00.

Ms. Bennett asked how many hours do the kids spend in the program for one day, and it was noted it is a 3 hour program twice a week. Mr. Montgomery indicated that he agrees we should keep it at \$12.00 but it is something to definitely look at down the road. Mr. MacHolda pointed out that Mr. Keprios' staff report indicates that he suggested raising the fee a number of years ago and the Mayor at that time opposed his recommendation. Mr. Herring made the comment that there is now a new Mayor. He also noted that he

would be inclined to start moving the fee up, however, if the philosophy is to keep it as low as possible he's okay with that too.

Ms. Bennett asked if scholarships are available to families who cannot afford to sign their kids up for a particular program. Mr. MacHolda responded that yes, there are scholarships available for all of the park and recreation programs as well as all of the athletic associations. He noted that they even offer grant-in-aid for pool passes.

Mr. MacHolda explained that salaries are the biggest expense to the playground program. Mr. White commented that if the fee is raised \$2.00 that will only generate another \$800.00 to \$900.00 and is that really worth it. Mr. Montgomery noted that maybe the Park Board should look at raising the playground fee next year but leave it the same for this year.

Mr. MacHolda explained that at the last Park Board meeting it was discussed whether to keep the user fee at \$6.00 or raise it to \$7.00. Mr. Keprios had previously recommended raising it to \$6.25, a 4% increase. However, the Park Board's reaction was to leave it the same or raise it more so that you are benefiting from it in which Mr. Keprios would prefer to see it left at \$6.00 for this year. Mr. Montgomery indicated that he feels the fee should stay at \$6.00 and notify the people the fee will go up next year. Mr. Jenkins pointed out that the staff report also states that the fee should maybe be left the same indefinitely. Mr. MacHolda explained that is because we are the only community who charges a facility use fee for adult and youth athletic associations.

Mr. MacHolda explained that when the user fee started in 1987 it was \$5.00 per person and at that time it created a lot of waves with the Park Board as well as with the athletic associations. However, it was something the City Council voted on. In 1991 the fee went from \$5.00 to \$6.00 per participant and once again, the athletic associations were not very pleased. Mr. MacHolda noted that all of the programs are starting to escalate and this is just another expense. Ms. Bennett asked Mr. MacHolda when he says escalates does he mean by participants or what. Mr. MacHolda commented that the cheapest program is probably soccer or basketball and that fee is approximately \$50.00 to \$75.00 and there are a lot of families who have multiple kids playing multiple sports.

Mr. Herring asked what is the current balance that the soccer program has in their account in which Mr. MacHolda replied approximately \$60,000. Mr. Herring stated that he understands we are the recipient and there is another side to that but raising it \$1.00 would increase their costs by \$2,200 when they have a \$60,000 balance in their account. Mr. MacHolda stated that the \$6.00 per participant is the fee that is paid before any participant can step on an outdoor field or ice rink.

Mr. Herring stated that staff is also providing all of the support, photocopying, etc. Mr. MacHolda responded that is not part of this. He explained that in 1987 the elected officials took a portion of the Park Director's budget which ended up being the maintenance budget and cut it in half. Therefore, we needed to find a way to generate

dollars to bring that back up. Therefore, in order to determine the amount of money that we needed to generate to make up for the money that was lost we looked at the number of participants. Again Mr. MacHolda pointed out that we are the only community that charges a facility use fee.

Mr. Herring confirmed that administrative costs are not part of this. Mr. MacHolda responded that the tax dollars cover the city employees and what they do. The facility use fee is for things like chalk, ag-line, those kind of expenses.

Bill Jenkins MOVED TO APPROVE THE 1999 FEES AND CHARGES WITH THE CORRECTION THAT THE FIELD USE FEE BE CHANGED TO \$6.00 PER PARTICIPANT FOR 1999. Beth Hall SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

III. **OTHER**

A. Facilities Report - Mr. MacHolda stated that Mr. Keprios will be giving a “Facilities Report” presentation to the City Council next Monday. At the November Park Board meeting he will give an update on his findings as well as any new direction he may receive from the City Council.

B. Leash Free Ordinance - Mr. Herring asked if this topic could be held off until the November Park Board meeting in which Mr. MacHolda replied yes.

C. Wooddale Comfort Station - Mr. MacHolda explained that 700 letters will be going out to the residents in the Wooddale Park area. He indicated that a meeting has been set for November 19th in the City Council chambers for these residents to voice their opinions regarding the comfort station. Mr. MacHolda stated that he did bring drawings if anyone would like to see them. Mr. Montgomery stated that he thought 700 letters were already sent out and they were opposed to the site. Mr. MacHolda replied approximately 400 letters were sent out originally and not many showed up for the meeting. Mr. Montgomery asked if they are looking at putting it in a different location with the same design and then asked what brought the residents back. Mr. Herring commented that he didn’t think people wanted to have the portable toilets as well as this was viewed as an interim solution.

Mr. Herring suggested that rather than going through these and looking at the plans now we can do it at the November Park Board meeting which will take place before the Wooddale neighborhood meeting. Everyone agreed.

D. Edina Aquatennial Swim Meet - Mr. MacHolda informed the Park Board that on Tuesday, October 20th he will be meeting with Mr. Keprios, the Edina Swim Club’s president, past-president as well as the Swim Club’s coach to discuss some options for the Aquatennial Swim Meet. He indicated that one of the first options he sees is moving the swim meet to a different weekend which seemed to be favorable with the general public. Possibly May 28th, 29th and 30th or try to keep the wading pool open during a July swim

meet. However, it would be very difficult for two groups to co-exist that time of year but it is an option to keep the wading pool and bathhouse both operational along with the swim meet. Mr. White commented that when he used to swim in that swim meet the whole pool area needed to be used, including the wading pool area to wait for their next event. Mr. White asked if it would be possible to have a night swim meet and have it start at 3:00 p.m., that way the pool could still be open for part of the day. Ms. Bennett replied that is not an option because it takes too long to set up the electronic pads and that is why they leave them in and shut down the pool.

Mr. Herring asked what about having the swim meet in June. Mr. MacHolda responded that based on the competitive swim calendar those dates are already taken by other meets. He noted that another alternative is to again have it at the University of Minnesota. Ms. Bennett asked how the meet went at the U of M this past year. Mr. MacHolda commented that from what he read in the minutes it was larger than it has been in the past, it was very well run and was still profitable.

Mr. Herring asked if the swim meet is held at the Aquatic Center are we talking about having a situation where it is there every other year. Mr. MacHolda indicated he doesn't know if that would be the case or not. Mr. Herring stated that we need to come up with a plan so that staff doesn't spend a lot of time doing this every year. Mr. MacHolda asked the Park Board how they feel about it. Mr. Herring indicated that the Park Board has asked them to go to the U of M. Ms. Bennett commented that maybe if they are able to schedule the U of M right now they will be able to pick the date they want.

Mr. MacHolda stated that he thinks the Swim Club would like to see the aquatic center available for the Aquatennial Swim Meet the second weekend in July on an every year basis. He indicated that he knows from his research there are very few outdoor pools that still have a meet. Mr. Montgomery asked what happens when it rains. It was noted that the meet goes on rain or shine. That is another reason the U of M would be a good spot the Swim Club because they would have a guarantee of good conditions.

Mr. Herring indicated to Mr. MacHolda he knows where the Park Board stands on this issue in which Mr. MacHolda stated that he will communicate that to the Edina Swim Club at the meeting next week.

E. Athletic Association Funds - Ms. Bennett stated that if you look at some of the different athletic association's minutes they list their net worth and there a few associations that have a fair amount of money in checking, savings and even CD's. She asked if these amounts ever get to zero or at least down to a reasonable amount. She also asked if the fees that are being charged are fair and reasonable to the people participating in these sports. Ms. Bennett commented that these are non-profit organizations. She did point out that she is aware that we do benefit from some of these organizations with scoreboards, fields, etc., which is wonderful but does question the large sum of money that some of the associations have.

Mr. Herring commented that here is a classic example in the EYSA minutes in which a discussion was held of raising their fees \$10.00 to \$20.00 which would allow them to buy additional gear and support having a batting cage built at Pamela Park. Ms. Bennett responded that it sounds like they are into fundraising and it's her understanding they are supposed to be non-profit organizations.

Mr. MacHolda stated that as staff he sits on a lot of these boards and has tried to explain to them that is really not their charge to build facilities. It's supposed to be the Park and Recreation's capital budget from tax dollars that should be maintaining the facilities. Mr. MacHolda went on to explain that because Edina is an older community we aren't able to always keep up with our capital, therefore, we went out and did a bond referendum. When we ran out money with that we realized we needed more dollars because we had not asked for enough money to refurbish all of the facilities. Mr. MacHolda commented that he would like to see the city either raise taxes or have another referendum to build baseball fields or batting cages, etc. He indicated that he feels that the registration fee should be in line with what it costs to participate, e.g. a shirt, an official, possibly a team photo, and that is all it should be. Mr. Herring stated that he feels there should also be some cushion.

Mr. MacHolda pointed out that some sports are healthier than others. He explained that it wasn't that long ago that boys basketball had 350 participants and now they are over 1,000 and with the fee staying the same that is the reason they have made so much money in such a short time. However, that association does recognize that they have more money than they would like to have as a non-profit organization. He indicated that he thinks they are going to try to spend that down as well as keep their fees constant. Mr. MacHolda stated that the Basketball Association is, however, working with the city and school on this facilities report and they may make a contribution towards those gymnasiums. They have talked about earmarking \$25,000 a year if that's what it takes to get those gymnasiums built. Mr. Herring indicated that he has trouble with an association basically charging extra to the youth participant so they can raise \$25,000 a year for the city. Mr. MacHolda responded that right now they are not charging anything extra.

Mr. Herring indicated that he is also concerned that as a city there are a lot of laws which state how we can tax, what we can do with our money, we need to have sealed bids, etc. These are all to ensure the integrity of the these funds and the athletic associations don't really have that. Ms. Bennett also pointed out that the boards are not consistent, they are changing every year and there is always a new philosophy. She noted that it seems the fees are not in line with it costs to run the program each year.

Mr. Jenkins asked Ms. Bennett what she thinks we should do with those excess funds. Ms. Bennett replied that she would do a fee reduction and just keep chunking away at what is in their savings, checking, etc. Ms. Bennett stated that the associations are different than say the PTA whose job it is to raise funds and give donations back to the school. Mr. Herring added that the Hockey Parents would not be affected by this because their whole purpose is to raise money.

Mr. Herring asked staff if a report could be put together showing the current size, annual budget and recent account balances of the different athletic associations. Mr. White suggested giving the account balances for the last two to three years in case there has been a significant increase or decrease in the number of participants.

Mr. Herring informed Mr. MacHolda that he doesn't want him to spend a lot of time on this but to just try and get some recent preliminary data for the Park Board to discuss this matter further.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Andrew Montgomery MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 8:30 P.M. Becky Bennett SECONDED THE MOTION. MEETING ADJOURNED.